

A BLACK CIVILIZATION

252 put beside the bird. The feathers are plucked and placed in the water, and the emu is put in the fire to remove the smaller feathers. The wet feathers are then made into a small brush which is rubbed against the body to remove the remaining feathers and burned quills.

The abdomen is opened down the center and a large enough aperture made to admit the hand and pull out the entrails. The heart may or may not be removed. When the intestines are pulled out they are cut up into eight-inch pieces, the crop being cut off by itself. A stick is used to turn the pieces, including the crop, inside out, and the inner lining is removed. All the pieces are washed and the two ends of the entrails tied with grass or string. A small hole is dug, heated stones from a large fire are placed in it, and, on top of them, large green leaves. The intestines are then put on the leaves and covered with another coating of leaves, stones, and a final covering of earth. The food is then left to steam until it is considered properly cooked. The intestines swell up and the intestinal fat melts. This is the purpose of turning them inside out and tying them, since the fat thus retained is considered a great delicacy. While the intestines are cooking other stones are pulled out of the large fire and a large hole is made in the ground in which the stones and a coating of leaves are placed. The emu is first filled with hot stones and then placed on the leaves and covered with more leaves and stones, and the hole is then filled up with earth and grass. While the emu cooks the intestines are eaten.

When a turtle has been harpooned and beached, the head and neck are cut off, hot stones which have been prepared are pushed inside, and the neck and anus are filled with leaves. This makes a kind of steam oven of the turtle's body. While steaming, the turtle is turned on its back. A sharp stone knife (now usually a steel one) is used to split the shell from neck to tail. A parallel split about one inch from the other is made and the strip of shell removed. Then the hunter, starting where the dorsal and ventral shells meet, pulls back on the shell or has a boy pull while he cuts, sometimes with the aid of a stone hitting against his knife.

After this, the leg bones are broken and chunks of meat cut from the animal. This opens the body so that the entrails are in view, now well steamed and, according to native taste, thoroughly cooked. They are eaten immediately. The liver is put in the fire and cooked with coals; it is eaten by the older men. The little boys are given the shells to pick. The blood is poured into a receptacle and drunk by the men.

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226 macerated and placed in the pool. Some of the writer's informants
278 claim that a poison grass is used similarly.

252 A fish is cut in halves the long way and cooked immediately because
753 it is believed that if a bit old when eaten it causes leprosy (but see
Magic, page 207).

252 Oysters, periwinkles, and the many varieties of bivalves gathered
226 by the women are cooked on the shore at the spot where they are
collected. A fire is made over stones and the shellfish put on the hot
stones and embers. The shells open or crack and the flesh is removed
and eaten by the women or placed in small receptacles to be carried
home to the men.

222 Honey is gathered by both sexes, but usually by men. When a hive
is discovered in a hollow tree that is not too large the tree is cut down
and the trunk split open. The honey is usually eaten where found.

[136] Gathering honey is a painless task in Australia because the native bees
are stingless. The honey is often put in a water-tight basket, mixed

• 272 with water and drunk as a beverage. It is never allowed to ferment;
273 the natives have no intoxicating drink. The wax is formed into a
237 ball and put in the men's baskets to be used in the construction of
various implements.

222 Pandanus fruit, ripening about August, is cut up into fine pieces
252 and cooked. The small cabbage palm is gathered about the same time,
the whole trunk of the plant being cooked and beaten on a log, and
the glutinous product eaten. Spear grass is chewed by the children as
well as the other people.

222 Cycad palm nuts are gathered from the center of the trees by the
women with the aid of a forked stick placed against the trunk to
make a rough ladder. The nuts are knocked off with a club if they are
252 too high to reach. The outside skin is removed and the kernels are
placed in a large basket which is submerged in a fresh-water pool and
allowed to remain several days until the poisonous qualities of the
green fruit are removed. Sometimes the women first heat the nuts,
thus reducing the time for soaking them.

222 Several varieties of tree grubs are eaten. Both men and women
gather them. They select trees which have the proper indications upon
them, split open the trunk, and remove the grubs which are washed
and eaten raw. They look much like the entrail of a fowl and taste
much like a snail.

The nests of all the larger birds are robbed and the eggs eaten.
During the proper season the various sea birds lay their eggs in great